

4-1-1993

## PastWatch - April 1993

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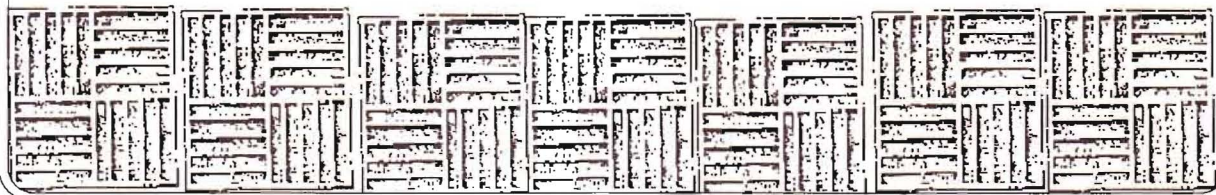
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# PastWatch



Volume Two, Number One, April 1993. Occasional Newsletter of the Archaeological Research Trust of The South Carolina Institute of Archaeology & Anthropology, University of South Carolina

## ART TOUR TO SANTA ELENA

On May 13, 1993, the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology will sponsor a bus tour to the Spanish capital site of Santa Elena! This will be a splendid opportunity to visit this famous site while archaeologists Stanley South and Chester DePratter are in the process of excavating a well and part of a house structure in the town of Santa Elena. We will also view excavations of another section of the town that may represent the first occupation of Spanish settlers over four hundred years ago in 1566, discussed in this issue of *PastWatch* by Chester DePratter on page 1. The bus will leave the Institute at 8:15 am and arrive on Parris Island near Beaufort in time for the lecture and tour of the site. A catered lunch will be provided as well as the popular book, *Archaeology at Santa Elena: Doorway to the Past*, autographed by Stanley South. The bus will return to Columbia by 4:30 pm. The cost of the tour is \$25.00, payable to SCIAA by May 10, 1993. *Seating is limited.* Please fill out the registration form on page 8 and send it to: Nena Powell, SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1321 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC 29208. If there are any questions, please contact Ms. Powell at (803) 777-8170.



## TWO SANTA ELENAS?

By Dr. Chester DePratter



ART:SCIAA

Stanley South, SCIAA archaeologist, has been excavating at the site of Santa Elena on Parris Island since 1979. Beginning in 1991, excavations were opened to visitors through the efforts of the Columbian Quincentennial Commission of South Carolina. During the past two field seasons, nearly 3000 people (about half were school children in organized groups) have visited the excavations to view the remains of this Spanish colonial town as they were uncovered.

Over the past 14 years Stan South has excavated in the remains of two forts on the site, and he has dug a portion of the town containing several houses. Work during the past two years has focused on a single structure approximately 24 feet square. This building was constructed of posts one foot in diameter set in postholes three feet across. Wells were found at the two corners on the west side, and refuse filled pits were found nearby. This was a substantial building, and it may have been a public building rather than a private residence. Stan is still working on the report on this structure, so we will have to wait to read his

conclusions concerning this buildings' origins and function. An interesting feature of this building concerns the details of its construction. A framework of large posts was erected, and then a light framework of branches or cane was woven between them. The walls were then plastered inside and out with a layer of clay several inches thick. This clay was in turn covered with a one-half to three-quarters inch thick layer of white plaster made from burned oyster shells. This white plaster is important, because it provides a clue to the dating of this building.

On March 25, 1580, Governor Pedro Menéndez Márques stated in a letter to the King that houses in Santa Elena were being "covered with lime inside and out, and with their flat roofs of lime." He goes on to say that this "lime" was made by burning oyster shells, and that because of this new construction technique the Indians had "lost their mettle" (i.e. they no longer were able to successfully destroy houses in the town with flaming arrows as they had previously).

This reference means that the house excavated in the past two years must date to the year 1580 or later.

(Continued on Page 3)



## CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

This *PastWatch* issue has started 1993 off to a great start! The current archaeological research being conducted and illustrated in the adjacent articles is testimony to your valuable support. Please join us on the bus tour to Santa Elena!

*PastWatch*, published four times a year, is the newsletter of the Archaeological Research Trust, SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina

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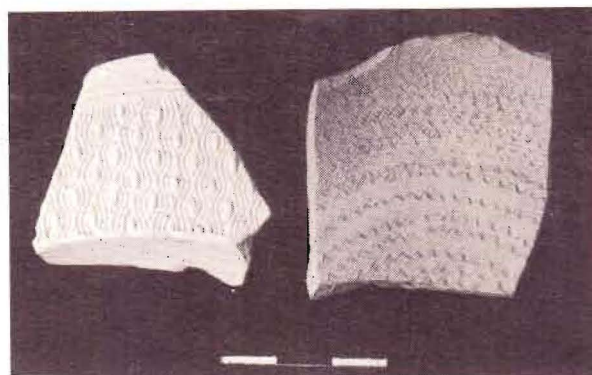
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Biscuit-fired ware made by John Bartlam.

## A SEARCH FOR CAROLINA CREAMWARE AT CAIN HOY

By Stanley South

For the past twenty-five years archaeologists in South Carolina have been finding creamware sherds that are a darker shade of yellow than the usual Staffordshire creamware fragments found on British colonial sites. This darker creamware was made either by a potter named John Bartlam or his foreman, William Ellis. Though origination of this pottery has not been determined, our research has revealed locations that include a manufactory at Cain Hoy, on the banks of the Wando River, between 1765 and 1770, or by Bartlam at Charleston in 1770, or by Bartlam at Camden, between 1774 to 1781. Historic documents also revealed that William Ellis, went to Salem, North Carolina and taught their potter, Rudolph Christ, how to make the mould-made Staffordshire type creamware and stoneware. Since we did not know which of these pottery sites was responsible for the darker sherds we were finding, we called them "Carolina creamware".

Some fragments of John Bartlam's pottery were found by George Terry in Cain Hoy in the 1970s, and these have long been of interest to me and to Bradford L. Rauschenberg, Director of Research at the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA) at Old Salem, North Carolina. Brad recently published a documentary account of the activities of John Bartlam and his foreman, Ellis, in *The Journal of Early Southern Decorative Arts*, Volume 17, No. 2.

In the spring of 1992, a joint

proposal of SCIAA, the Diachronic Research Foundation, and MESDA, for survey and planning to look for America's first creamware factory, was funded by the South Carolina Department of Archives and History. Through the cooperation of Bill Johnstone of Waterfront Properties, Inc., Carl Steen and Kathryn Joseph, and a number of volunteers, spent the month of March carrying out a sampling survey and a number of Bartlam's biscuit fired pottery fragments were found. These included the "Carolina creamware", tortoiseshell glazed ware, green glazed ware with a barleycorn pattern, dot diaper and basket moulded ware, cauliflower, melon, and pineapple moulded fragments. A report on this project is currently being prepared by Rauschenberg, South, and Steen.

In October, I returned to Cain Hoy, through the cooperation of the private lot owners, Les Dyches and Larry Ammann, to conduct additional investigations until mid-December. Assisting me with this project were Jim Legg, Ashley Chapman, Barbara Hiott, Dennis Graham, and from SCIAA Tommy Charles and Joe Beatty. This project was funded through MESDA by private donors, through the cooperation of SCIAA, which resulted in many more fragments of Bartlam's broken pottery being recovered. We found that he was making a wide variety of wares, including the earliest known production anywhere of what was called "blue and white" and "China" at the

(Continued on Page 6)



## Santa Elena Continued

This places it in the second occupation of Santa Elena. The town was established in 1566, and by 1569 there were 327 people living there. Over the next several years, relations with local Indians deteriorated, and Santa Elena was temporarily abandoned in 1576. The town was burned by Indians as its former residents fled the harbor, so we know that the first town was destroyed.

In 1577, a new contingent of soldiers and settlers arrived with a prefabricated blockhouse on their ships, and within six days the blockhouse was up and work was underway on rebuilding the town. This second town was occupied for ten years before it too was abandoned in 1587, and the site was never again occupied by the Spanish.

The assumption has always been that the second town was built on the exact same location as the first town. But, while working on the site last year, I began to consider what was known about the town's remains excavated so far. First, there is no evidence of rebuilding of structures in the town. If the second town were built over the remains of the first town, there should be some intrusion of postholes and features into the remains of the first town. To date, no such evidence has been found. Second, given the position of the town relative to the forts, we know that the guns from the first fort would have had to fire through the town to reach the entrance to Port Royal Sound if the first and second towns were indeed at the same location. That did not seem right to me. And then we found the burned, oyster shell mortar—plastered structure that had to have been built during the second occupation. I looked at the reports describing the other houses that have been exposed through archaeology, and they too showed evidence for the use of oyster shell plaster. Clearly we were digging in the second town. So was the first town beneath it? No, it wasn't!

So where is the first town? I do not yet know, but I have an idea (hypothesis in the archaeological jargon) that I will be testing in the 1993 field

season. After looking at the placement of the known forts, the location of the second town, and the contours of the ground surface, I noticed that there was a high bluff just to the north of the area that has been the focus of all archaeology at Santa Elena to date.

What if the first town were located here, on this high, well-drained piece of land? If so, it would solve the problem of the first fort having to fire through the town, because then all of the known forts would be south of this first town and closer to the harbor. It would also solve the dilemma of no intrusions



on earlier remains, because then the two towns would have been located several hundred feet apart rather than one on top of the other. And finally, it would provide an explanation for why all of the houses excavated to date have plaster made from burned oyster shells. They are all in the second town and date to a time after the Spanish discovered that they could make this plaster out of oyster shells. Problem solved.

Well, the problem is not exactly solved. We need to conduct archaeological testing to determine whether remains of the first town actually exist in the proposed (or hypothesized) location north of previous exca-

*Photo below: Chester DePratter sketches feature* vations. I have received a \$990 mini-grant from the South Carolina Humanities Council that will in part fund this testing, so the search for this second town will begin in April of this year when Stan South and I return to Santa Elena to continue the project that he began 14 years ago. While I am off searching for the first town, Stan will continue working in the same area where we have worked for the past two years in what we now believe was the second town. He will be excavating at least one of the two wells discovered last year, and he will be opening another large excavation unit in an attempt to discover another building or two.

This will be an exciting year at Santa Elena! Work will begin April 5 and continue through May 21. Prime time to view the excavations will be between April 19 and May 14. Come see us, and bring your neighbors along.

P.S. The 1993 field research at Santa Elena will be supported by grants, gifts, and awards from an anonymous donor, the Robert L. Stephenson Archaeological Research Fund, South Carolina Humanities Council, Columbian Quincentennial Commission of South Carolina, SCIAA, and contributions by several individuals. Additional funds have been requested from the USC Research and Productive Scholarship Committee, but no decision has been made by that committee. As usual, raising money for fieldwork is much easier than raising money for the equally important tasks of artifact cataloging, analysis, and report preparation and publication. When fieldwork at Santa Elena ends on May 21, we shall have spent all of the funds raised for 1993. Please help us find funds necessary to complete the processing and analysis of collections. Contributions in any amount will be appreciated. If you know of individuals, corporations, or foundations that may be interested in supporting this important work, please contact The Archaeological Research Trust at SCIAA. Thank you for your help!



## PETERSBURG BOAT PROJECT

By Mark M. Newell

A final design meeting was held on April 12th on the construction of a full-sized mountain boat at Augusta, Georgia—an experimental archaeology project partially sponsored by SCIAA through the Archaeological Research Trust.

The 50 foot long and 7 foot wide vessel, known as a Petersburg Boat, was built to carry tobacco and cotton down the shallow upper reaches of the Savannah River. The uniquely designed craft operated from the later 18th century to the early 20th century—one of the most successful and long lived small craft designs of its era.

Wreckage of these craft have yet to be found in the field. Small craft research Mark Newell developed a probable design for the construction of the craft in 1992 using archival accounts and drawings and one photograph taken in 1875.

These drawings were then transferred to a computer system in Sa-

vannah, Georgia, where historian Rusty Fleetwood used a sophisticated program to analyze and fine tune Newell's drawings. The result was a second set of drawings which were used to build a scale model of the craft.

The model was used to generate full scale working drawings of the boat. It was also used to raise funds in the Augusta area for the construction project. To date, a total of \$83,000 have been raised and plans are underway to start construction in a facility donated by the Graniteville Company on the banks of the Augusta Canal.

The project is supported by SCIAA, The Augusta Canal Authority, The Georgia Pacific Corporation, The Creel Foundation, The Sons of Confederate Veterans, The Barrett Tree Company, The Augusta Archaeological Society, and numerous private individuals. The vessel will be built on the banks of the canal in a public setting.

The original Petersburg Boats were built of pine planking and pine frames with small covered sections on the bow and stern. The crew of six would usually wait for what was called a "boatin' river"—high water driven by

rains—that would flush the long narrow craft through the downstream rapids at breakneck speed.

When the new reconstruction is finished, the construction crew will move the boat to the Savannah River where its performance will be tested and recorded. The craft will then be loaded with products typical of the nineteenth century—cotton bales, flour barrels, and possibly a millstone cut from Elberton granite. These products will then be taken down river to Savannah as a pre-1996 Olympic cultural event. Plans for the millstone include its presentation to the City of Savannah as a monument to the Petersburg boatmen, Elberton granite, and the historic trade on the upper Savannah River.



Cotton Boat: SCIAA

## ANNOUNCING A CONFERENCE ON:

**SOUTHERN COLONIAL BACKCOUNTRY: *Beginning an Interdisciplinary Dialogue***

**October 15-16, 1993  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, South Carolina**

**Sponsored by the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina**

**Conference Chairs: David Colin Crass and Richard David Brooks**

Recent scholarship in several disciplines has focused on the emergence of new societies in frontier settings. Historians, geographers, and archaeologists have all pursued research

in which emphasis is placed on social and economic perspectives, ethnicity, community formation, environmental history, and a multitude of other broad topics. The recent challenges in the historical community focus on such issues as economic development and cultural boundary maintenance, and efforts to integrate an anthropological perspective in the examination of material culture are all reflective of a growing interest in large issues which are ripe for interdisciplinary research.

An interdisciplinary approach to frontier studies has much to offer. Historians' actor-based recountings of the past and command of archival data can in many cases increase our understanding of the past. Geographers can offer unique insights into this area of study from both a spatial and temporal perspective. Archaeologists' use of both

material remains and written documents offers a more complete view of past human behavior. This conference will allow historians, geographers, archaeologists, museum interpreters, and scholars from other disciplines to explore the potential of interdisciplinary approaches for their own specialties. Emphasis is placed on presentations which will offer opportunities for contributions from other areas of scholarship. Time will be set aside for informal small-group discussions between researchers from all disciplines. The public is welcome to participate. For further information, contact Dave Crass or Richard Brooks at (803) 725-3623 at the Savannah River Site.



## SIGNIFICANT ARTIFACT COLLEC- TION DONATED TO THE INSTITUTE By Tommy Charles

From 1982 to 1984, Tommy Charles at the SC Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, traveled throughout South Carolina and visited local artifact collectors to 1) determine what classes of artifacts have been removed from prehistoric sites, document these data, and record the associated sites; 2) set up a file containing information on what has been collected, where this material was collected, who presently holds the collection, and the availability of these collections for future research; 3) form a better relationship between the professional and avocational archaeologists of our state, encouraging cooperation in the preservation of our remaining archaeological sites, demonstrating the value of properly recording artifacts, and providing opportunities in archaeology through the Archaeological Society of South

Carolina.

During the Collector's Survey in 1982, Tommy had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Samuel E. Wiles from Calhoun Falls. Over a period of 25 years, Mr. Wiles collected an extensive local collection of prehistoric American Indian artifacts representing dozens of sites within a very localized area around Calhoun Falls. This extensive collection represents 30,000-40,000 artifacts and has tremendous research potential because of its authenticity. None of the artifacts represented in the collection have been bought, sold, or fabricated.

Last week Mr. Wiles donated this significant collection to the Institute. He wanted the collection to remain in tact and housed where it could be protected and where students and researchers could have access to it. The collection represents every type of stone tool that was made by Native Americans living in South Carolina during the Paleoindian to the Mississippian time periods including axes, mortars, unifacial tools, knives, scrapers, and arrowheads.. This collection is important because it represents a complete

Savannah River Biface: SCIAA



SAVANNAH  
RIVER

collection of stone tools from a small localized area.

This summer, Tommy will be continuing the Collector's Survey throughout the state. If anyone with an artifact collection who has an interest in learning more about what you have found, please give Tommy a call and he will be delighted to talk to you about it. He will be setting up his schedule soon. The Institute is very appreciative of this significant donation to its collection. We thank Mr. Wiles for his generous contribution, and we encourage other collectors in the state to consider donating their collections in the future.

## THE SEARCH FOR FRANCIS MARION'S CAMP

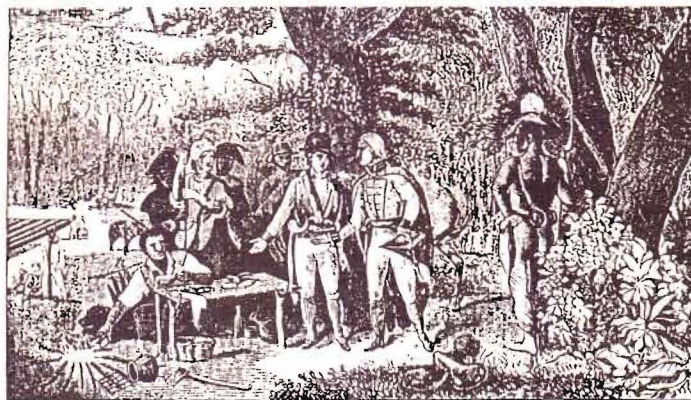
By Steven D. Smith

**The South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology will initiate a systematic survey of a portion of Snow's Island in search of Francis Marion's (The Swamp Fox) legendary 1781 camp.** Steve Smith, archaeologist with the Institute, will direct a team of archaeologists and volunteers this October. From around December of 1780 to April 1781, Francis Marion used Snow's Island as a base camp for his partisan band fighting for independence during the American Revolution. Surrounded

by rivers and swamp, this camp afforded his troops protection to organize raids against British troops occupying

camp with one detachment, while Marion was effectively stopping the other. The exact location of the camp

has since been lost through time. This will mark the first attempt by professional archaeologists to locate and excavate the camp. The project is being sponsored by the landowners, Sonoco Products Company. Volunteers and additional financial assistance would be greatly appreciated. Interested readers can con-



Marion inviting a British Officer to Dinner. PAGE 179.

South Carolina. In a two-pronged attack, the British were able to destroy the

tact SCIAA for additional information. Art: SCIAA: [Simms: Life of Marion: 1844]



**Director's Vista**  
**By Bruce Rippeteau**  
**Director and State Archaeologist**

**One of the finest accomplishments, I believe, of 1992, was the fundraising progress made by SCIAA's Archaeological Research Trust, led by Board Member Dr. Albert Goodyear. ART has raised \$29,693.00 for our Endowment this first year. Additionally some \$40,000 in projects, largely by Board Member Mark Newell, were close under the aegis of ART.**

I appreciate this generosity in these difficult financial times in which we all find ourselves. Thank you, Al, and all the Board, and especially all of you who gave so generously towards this vision of private support. A granite plaque is being created to commemorate this profound generosity.

Another great accomplishment of last year was the November 8, 1992 barbecue arranged by Al, funded by the South Carolina Underwater Archaeological Research Council

(SCUARC), Board Chairman Roland Young, and hosted by Sue and Phil Neeley at their lodge on the South Edisto River. The best BBQ in the US was most graciously prepared by longtime supporters Dianne and Sammy Lee which fed approximately 55 of the ART Faithful.

1992 also saw our orderly expansion of the Board to a full complement of eight members. Joining us in 1992, for two year terms, were Mr. Shipp Harris, an attorney in Columbia and Mr. Antony Harper, a businessman in Greenville. Both Shipp and Tony have been associated with SCIAA for a long time, Shipp through the SC Underwater Archaeological Research Council (SCUARC), and Tony, who helped write our first Act in 1963, and has long been interested in archaeology. Welcome Aboard!

I would like to invite you to join fellow Art supporters on a chartered bus trip to Parris Island to visit the famous site of Santa

Elena. Don't miss it!

Lastly, let me encourage you to again contribute to the SCIAA **ART** Endowment in 1993. The Board in its March meeting voted to make our first awards this coming fall from the **ART** endowment. These first awards will no doubt be modest, but we are keeping the faith, and your earnings will be seen to nurture discovery and revelations of our South Carolina Archaeology.

Until the Bus Trip,



*Portrait of Pedro Menendez de Aviles, founder of Santa Elena:SCIAA*

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### **Cain Hoy Continued**

time, which Wedgwood later called "pearl white", and which we know today as pearlware. We now know, from Bartlam's biscuit sherds, that this ware was being made at Cain Hoy before 1770, when Bartlam moved away to begin a new potworks in Charleston.

At present, Dennis G. Graham, Jr., and Marianne Reeves are assisting me with the research on the Bartlam materials recovered from the Cain Hoy site. We have found that the Cain Hoy

site was a domestic household from which large quantities of Bartlam's pottery were being discarded along with many other mid-eighteenth century artifacts. Where Bartlam's kiln and factory were located is still unknown. We hope to return some day to continue the search for the ruins of his kiln and we hope to discover the waster dump, which holds many more secrets yet to be revealed about America's first creamware. This research is funded by private dona-

tions to MESDA through Brad Rauschenberg, but this will soon be expended. More donations from the private sector are needed to continue this research.

You can send donations to Bradford L. Rauschenberg, Director of Research, MESDA, Box 10310, Old Salem, Winston-Salem, North Carolina 27108, or to the ART, at SCIAA, 1321 Pendleton Street, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S. C. 29208.



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Please check the correct spelling of your name and note that appellations will be deleted and middle initials inserted only if specifically requested.

### THE CHARTER DONOR ENDOWMENT PLAQUE

Plans are now underway for the creation of the Granite 'Charter Supporters Commemorative Plaque' to honor the very first Charter Donors of the Archaeological Research Trust. Through the good offices of supporter Charles Comolli of Elberton, Georgia, the required section of blue Elberton granite has been donated for the plaque.

A design for the lettering is now being prepared and the next step will be to secure grants for funds or services to cover the cost of engraving the names on the slab. The finished plaque will feature the names of the SCIAA, The Trust, and the names of 1992 Charter Donors in English lettering approximately 1" high.

Symbols or special coloring will be used to denote the levels of support given by those listed during the Charter year.





## REGISTRATION FOR TOUR TO SANTA ELENA

PLEASE MAIL BEFORE: MAY 10, 1993

Registration for Bus, Catered Lunch, and Autographed copy of *Santa Elena*: \$25.00

Print Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Cancellations must be done by May 10, 1993 to receive a refund.

.....  
: **Newsflash!** A major new Spanish feature discovery at Santa Elena was :  
: reported by Dr. DePratter just prior to our press deadline at a new site :  
: near the Golf course clubhouse. Further details available at tour time. :  
: .....  
.....

## 1993 ART Supporter Schedule

Student.....\$10.00

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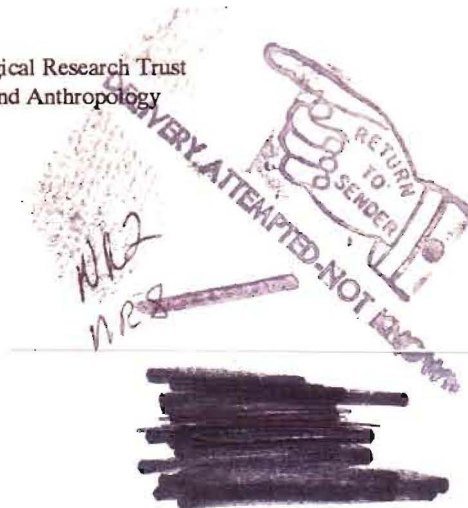
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